

A NEW SPECIES OF VERBESINA (ASTERACEAE-HELIANTHEAE)
FROM VERACRUZ MEXICO

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Routine identifications of Mexican Asteraceae has revealed the following novelty:

VERBESINA XICOANA B. TURNER, sp. nov.

V. seatonii S.F. Blake simile sed habitu fruticoso usque ad 1.4 m alto, foliis plerumque oppositis, et acheniorum setis pappi 1.5-3.0 mm longis differt.

Suffruticose perennial herb or shrub, 1.0-1.4 m high; stems terete, wingless, densely pubescent with appressed or spreading, tawny, hairs; leaves mostly opposite, but a few leaves alternate above, 3-7 cm long, 1.4-1.8 cm wide, sessile, or nearly so, ovate-elliptical, widest at or near the middle, hirsutulous above, densely appressed pubescent beneath with soft hairs, the margins entire or sometimes serrulate; heads radiate, arranged 2-5 in terminal lax cymules, the ultimate peduncles 3-9 cm long; involucre hemispheric, 6-8 mm high, 2-3 seriate, the bracts subequal, hirsutulous, blackish-green; receptacle conical, ca 2.5 mm wide, ca 2 mm high, the pales lanceolate, 5-6 mm long; ray florets 11-15, pistillate, fertile, the ligules yellow, 6-9 nervate, 12-16 mm long, 3-4 mm wide; disk florets numerous, the corollas yellow, pubescent, 3.7-4.0 mm long, the tube ca 1 mm, the throat tubular with lobes ca 0.5 mm long; anthers brown, the appendages ca 0.3 mm long; style branches with short, acute, appendages; achenes black, wingless, ca 2.5 mm long, 1.5 mm wide, the pappus of 2 readily deciduous awns, 1.5-3.0 mm long.

TYPE: MEXICO. VERACRUZ: Mpio. Xico, Barranca El Caracol, 1 km S of de Tembladeras, pine forest, 2900 m, 17 Aug 1983, Hector Narave E. 964 (holotype TEX; isotypes XAL)

Additional specimens examined: VERACRUZ: Mpio. Xico, Barranca El Caracol, 3000 m, 17 Aug 1983, H. Narave E. 961 (TEX, XAL).

Verbesina xicoana, because of its shrubby habit, superficially resembles V. robinsonii Fern. but differs in having sessile, mostly opposite leaves and small, wingless, achenes. It appears closest to the perennial herb, V. seatonii S.F. Blake, which differs in having mostly alternate leaves, larger heads and wingless, but pappose, achenes. Both V. xicoana and V. seatonii possess sessile leaves which are densely, but softly, appressed pubescent beneath, and both have conical receptacles with quite similar pales. The latter species occurs along the upper western slopes of Mount Orizaba (Puebla) eastward to Morelos and Mexico State in pine forests from 2800-3000 meters; V. xicoana occurs in similar habitats on the eastern upper slopes of Pico de Perote, Veracruz.